

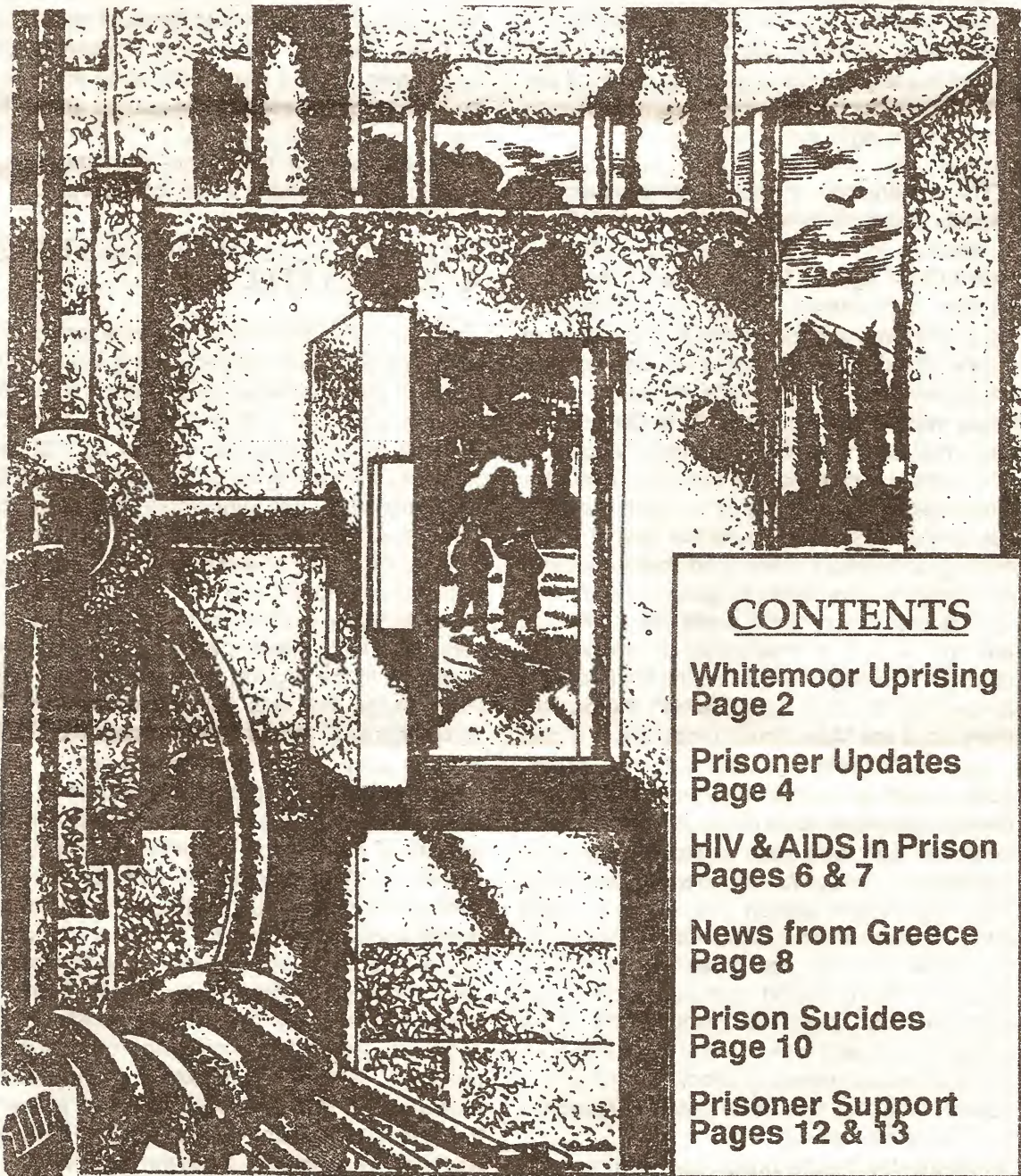
# ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS BULLETIN

Nº 3

Published by London Anarchist Black Cross

20p

FREE TO PRISONERS



## CONTENTS

Whitemoor Uprising  
Page 2

Prisoner Updates  
Page 4

HIV & AIDS in Prison  
Pages 6 & 7

News from Greece  
Page 8

Prison Suicides  
Page 10

Prisoner Support  
Pages 12 & 13

**SUPPORTING CLASS STRUGGLE PRISONERS**



# SUPPORT THE WHITEMOOR THIRTY

The following article is an edited version of two sent in by the prisoner John Bowden. He was moved from Whitemoor prison along with 29 others to various prisons around the country following the 'events' of March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> (see below) and is, as far as we know, currently in Pentonville. All thirty prisoners are being kept locked in a segregation unit - not for breaking any prison rules, but for showing solidarity with each other and trying to better their lot.

"The construction of Britain's latest maximum-security dispersal prison, Whitemoor in Cambridgeshire, is the clearest example yet that the Home Office agenda for prisons will continue to be one of increased control and repression. Despite the vague hopes of liberal reformists that the Woolf report might in some way characterise official penal policy for the '90s, Whitemoor illustrates that it is the American "New Generation" ideas that are influencing the Home Office.

Whitemoor is designed for maximum control. It incorporates the principle of constant observation and surveillance; it uses the idea of small, manageable groups of prisoners that are allowed no contact or interaction as groups. The American influence is apparent in pastel colour schemes and the use of a 'newspeak' terminology to conceal the reality of the place; the hospital wing is now the "Medical Care Centre"; the punishment block the "Adjustment Unit". There is also a clear conflict between the uniformed staff who have sought to maintain a more traditional and overtly oppressive style of control and the management staff who have opted for the more 'therapeutic', though no less coercive, approach. This has created tension. The marginalisation and virtual defeat of the Prison Officers' Association (POA) under the new 'fresh start' contract is shown in the profound demoralisation of the uniformed staff. They also claim that the Home Office is manipulating them whilst following vague and dangerous notions of absolute control. The parallels with the lock down prison in Marion in the States are striking.

From the day that the prison opened in November last year, solidarity amongst prisoners has been strong. During the visit of the Home Secre-

tary in January, prisoners staged a mass sit-down to protest against petty restrictions at the jail. In fact, so powerful was the solidarity and self-organisation of the prisoners that both wings had prisoner representation committees which met and negotiated with management on a regular basis. Virtually denied any representation themselves, screws were reduced to acting as 'go-betweens' between management and prisoners. However, although it seemed at one point to the prisoners that the regime might be easing up, things were to take a turn for the worst.

## THE MARCH WORK-STRIKE AND ITS EFFECT

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of March this year, prisoners at Whitemoor prison staged a mass work strike in protest over oppressive conditions at the prison. The administration responded with a show of brute force, deploying riot squads against the prisoners and locking the prison down, providing clear evidence that Whitemoor is basing its methods exclusively on control and repression.

Prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> March strike, tension and conflict in the prison had become widespread as prisoners collectively challenged and questioned the administration's determination to resist change or reform of the regime. A power struggle had taken shape and was gaining momentum, its central dynamic fed by a determination on both sides to shape and determine the regime of a prison obviously designed as a prototype for long term, dispersal prisons of the future. An enormous amount of money and expertise had been invested in Whitemoor as the ultimate word in control and containment, both guards and management were determined to "hold the line" against any attempt by prisoners to resist and fight back.

Prisoners' representative groups on C and D wings at the prison had sought constantly to negotiate with the administration the issue of prisoners' rights and a relaxation of the Whitemoor regime. They were met, however, at every turn and juncture with prevarication and evasion and it soon became clear that the administration was prepared to negotiate nothing and was simply using its meetings with the prisoners' rep-



representatives as a means of extracting intelligence and "clarifying" existing rules and regulations.

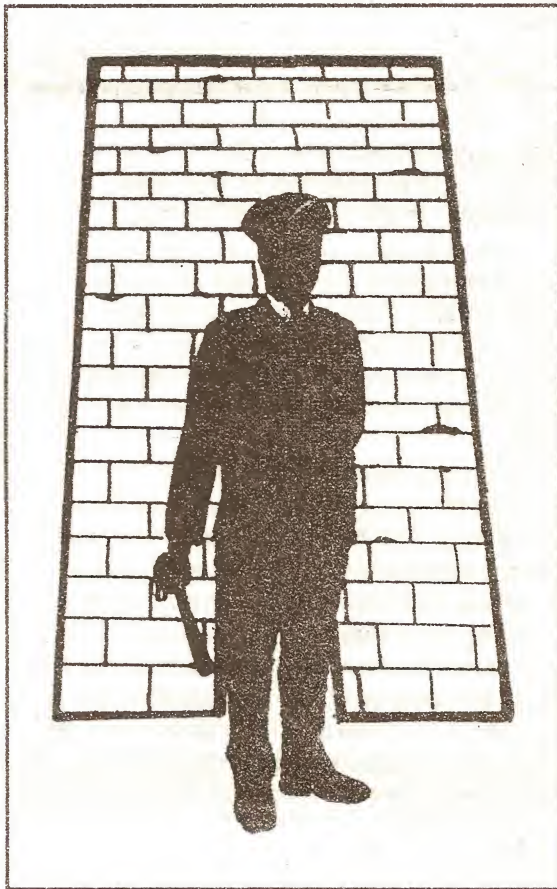
Meanwhile, the day-to-day struggle between prisoners and guards on the landings had produced a situation and relationship of power advantageous to the former. POA representatives at the prison claimed that staff were 'losing control' and prior to the strike on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, opinion amongst guards strongly favoured a hard line or 'tough' response to the prisoners' demands for a more liberalised regime. An inexorable process of prisoner empowerment had begun and both guards and governors were determined to crush it.

The strike at Whitemoor began as a localised dispute between inmate kitchen workers and the administration over the question of pay. The administration refused point blank to negotiate with the kitchen workers and threatened sackings and the 'reallocation' of the prisoners to workshops if the dispute continued. The kitchen workers responded with a call for solidarity from all other prisoners and by lunchtime on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March both C and D Wings came out in support. Rapidly improvised strike committees were then formed to respond to the organisational needs of the situation and from the perspective of the administration it became apparent that the balance of institutional power was now shifting in favour of the prisoners.

On the second day of the strike, prisoners on D Wing demanded a meeting with the head of 'inmate activities', Lynne Bowles, in order to discuss improvements of the regime generally. Despite her attempts to 'interview' prisoners individually about their grievances, a mass meeting was organised for that morning. In an obvious attempt at assuagement, Bowles agreed to 'review' the existing regime and promised the prisoners that all their complaints would be "carefully evaluated". She then cut the meeting short and explained that she was off to meet with the kitchen workers in an attempt to resolve their dispute. In fact, she met next with a Home Office official dispatched to the prison that day to oversee the breaking of the prisoners' strike. Between them they agreed that the prison should be locked down and the 'ringleaders' shipped out. Oblivious of such machinations, the prisoners collected their meals at lunchtime (cooked and served by guards) and allowed themselves to be locked within their cells for what they imagined would be the usual hour-long lunchtime

lock-up. They remained locked up for the remainder of the day.

At tea time, prisoners were unlocked individually to collect their meal and made to walk a gauntlet of screws dressed in full riot gear. They were also issued with a notice from assistant governor P.G.Kelly which said: "You have chosen not to follow the order to comply with the requirements of the regime. The process you have chosen to voice your objection is not acceptable. In order to secure the safety of both prisoners and staff you will remain locked up. The situation will be kept under review".



From 8.30pm onwards, prisoners were removed from their cells by riot squads and taken to the segregation unit. A couple of dozen prisoners were removed in such a fashion; the 'hard core' that Bowles and her colleagues claimed were inciting other prisoners to revolt. Their number included the D Wing spokespeople who had organised the meeting with her earlier in the day. At about 2.30pm these prisoners, stripped of all their possessions, were bussed out to Lincoln and Pentonville.

*Continued Page 9*



# PRISONER UPDATES

## STRANGeways

As reported in the last Bulletin, the Strangeways Showtrial is steaming ahead with the State throwing all it's weight around. The trial has taken 12 weeks so far, and has heard evidence from more than 100 witnesses. The jury at Manchester Crown Court has found three defendants guilty of riot (maximum 10 years). The defendants are Paul Taylor, John Derek Spencer, James Miller and Sydney Doran. Paul Taylor was given a sentence of 10 years; the other three 20 years between them. Four defendants have been acquitted: Alan Lord, Andrew Paul Nelson, Martin John McLatchie and Brian Parke. A verdict still has to be reached on one other.

The State, in it's usual fashion, had to have 'named ringleaders' for the Uprising - after all, it can't comprehend the concept of solidarity or people fighting back together. It should be remembered however, that the State did not have everything it's own way - all murder charges were dropped and 4 defendants have been acquitted of riot.

The Uprising also led to an official inquiry and subsequent report into conditions at Strangeways prison. The report concluded that intolerable conditions provoked the situation; that there was gross overcrowding; insanitary conditions and a degraded regime. No systematic brutality to prisoners (by other prisoners) was found. As a result, "slopping-out" is to be abolished (as well the recommendation of smaller units of prisoners to "encourage better relations with officers"! ) The Uprising also caused millions of pounds worth of

damage and Strangeways prison had to be virtually rebuilt - it now houses only 300 prisoners. However, it is due to open fully next year. Who knows what might happen then?



The Defendants still need your support. At the time of printing, we do not know where the three are being held: we will publish this as soon as the information is made available.

## GLEN LEWIS

Glen Lewis is yet another innocent man fitted up by the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad. He was framed in 1987 for armed robbery and sentenced to 10 years. His convictions have been quashed by the Court of Appeal, but the judge ordered a retrial - the first time this has happened. Glen was forced to sign blank sheets of statement paper after being threatened with a hypodermic syringe and denied a solicitor. At the Court of Appeal, Lord Lane said that the credibility of the two WMSCS detectives who arrested him was so "blighted" that the jury would not have convicted him in the original case if all the full facts had been known. The two detectives were:

DC John Perkins and DS Peter Reynolds. Glen also says he was headbutted and racially abused by Perkins. Later on, he was forced to sign blank interview sheets. He was then interviewed by DS Griffiths and DC Timmins about another armed robbery - he was again forced to sign blank sheets. (Tests showed that the sheets had been tampered with). DC Perkins and DS Reynolds were later found guilty of a disciplinary offence regarding interview records on another case.

Meanwhile, Glen has to wait for the date of the retrial.

Letters of support may be sent to: **Glen Lewis W56246**. HMP, The Dana, Shrewsbury, Salop SY1.



## WINSTON SILCOTT

Despite the quashing of the convictions of the Tottenham 3 last October, Winston Silcott is still inside. This is because he was convicted of another 'murder' - after defending himself against three attackers armed with knives. Winston was arrested and charged with murdering Anthony Smith, then released on bail, which implies that the authorities may well not have been taking it seriously. He was out on bail the night P.C. Blakelock died and he was then picked up and charged with his murder. The Blakelock trial took place after Winston had already been convicted to life imprisonment for the murder of Smith. Winston was to tell the jury in the Smith trial that it was self-defence, but under enormous pressure because he was then also charged with P.C. Blakelock's murder, he was advised to change his story. Winston is now planning an appeal against this conviction on the grounds of bias and self-defence, but doesn't yet have an appeal date. His brother, George, said the grounds for the appeal includes fresh evidence that was not presented at the original trial. This includes statements from six new witnesses who did not give evidence at the original trial. They say that Smith, along with two friends, all armed with knives, made an unprovoked attack on Winston at a party. Winston was unarmed, then seeing the seriousness of the situation, borrowed a knife off a friend for self-defence. It has now emerged that Winston's then solicitors - Anthony Steel and Co., knew of the vendetta Smith had against him and also had possession of a crucial statement made by Winston, but they now claim the statement never existed. However, parts of this statement have been found in notes. The firm has recently been forced to close by the Solicitors Complaints Bureau. We wish him Winston the best of luck with his appeal.

You can write to Winston: **B74053**, HMP Garret, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 7RP.

## KENNY CARTER

A Support Group has been set up for Kenny Carter. As reported in the last Bulletin, Kenny Carter was framed for the 'murder' of a cellmate and received life. However, he is now receiving some publicity for his case in the press. Hopefully more pressure may force the Home Office to reopen his case.

*Kenny Carter Support Group, c/o Box ABC, 121 Railton Road, London SE24.*

You can write to: **Kenny Carter AD3434**, HMP Whitemoor, Longhill Road, March, Cambridgeshire.

Latest news: We received a letter from Kenny recently in which he states that he was beaten up by screws again - this is apparently a regular occurrence. This time, his jaw was broken, his face beaten and he was strangled till he lost consciousness. This occurred at Hull: he made a complaint, but was quickly moved to Whitemoor to cover the incident up.

## BRICK LANE 4

As reported in the last ABC Bulletin, the 2<sup>nd</sup> March saw the start of a Crown Court trial against four anti-fascists and three fascists, all charged with Affray and in the same dock together. All seven were Bound Over for eighteen months, which although a relief that no anti-fascists were sent down, is nevertheless a typical State reaction - treating both fascists and anti-fascists alike when it suits them, except when it is in their interests to favour the fascists.

The picket of the court was apparently a success with a decent turn-out and no trouble was reported. We would like to express our best wishes to the anti-fascist defendants.

## LATEST PUBLICATIONS

### 'CONVICTIONS'

This is a magazine produced by prisoners and their families and friends in the US. It features articles, drawings, poems, etc. Broad range of stuff from all over the place.

Contact: Convictions, POB 1749, Carvallis, OR 97339-1749, USA. Yearly subscription rates: \$10 prisoners; \$12 others; \$17 institutions.

### 'PRISONERS NEWS SERVICE'

This is a regular paper produced in Toronto, Canada, which mainly covers political prisoners in the US/Canada, but also other prison struggles.

Contact: PSC Publishers, c/o Bulldozer, POB 5052, Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1W4, Canada. Free to prisoners; \$10 year; \$25 institutions.



## HIV AND AIDS IN PRISON

On the outside, being HIV+ can bring discrimination and victimisation at work and in social life (or stop you getting work at all), the tragedy of coping with full blown AIDS and the lack of support and back up in a society socially and medically unprepared to deal with it. Moralistic fear-mongering from the government fills a vacuum of inadequate funding and information on the ground. Most of the problems faced on the outside are made worse for prisoners as victimisation and segregation are all the more routine and accomplished inside prison walls.

It is still general policy in at least half of British prisons to segregate those known to be HIV+ and frequently prisoners who come forward for an HIV test are isolated before the outcome of the test is known and effectively stigmatised. Confidentiality is rarely respected. Where segregation is not policy in prisons, such as Bristol and Saughton in Edinburgh, this is often because it is seen as counter-productive; prisoners don't come forward for tests or to inform the prison staff that they have HIV if they know isolation and stigmatisation are likely to follow. Other prisons may have separate cells like the "K1 Unit" at Wandsworth where HIV+ prisoners are held - despite the fact that official Home Office policy states that prisoners with HIV should be treated no differently from others. Judge Stephen Tumin, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, called for an end to segregation in September '91 and the Home Office now claims the situation is being reviewed.

Current estimates put the number of prisoners with HIV in British jails at about 5% of the prison population - roughly 2000 inmates (Aids Education Research Trust figures Nov '91) though a clear assessment is difficult for the reasons mentioned above and due to the tendency of the prison administration to 'underestimate' the scale of the problem.

Rates of infection may vary across the country; Saughton prison in Edinburgh had as many cases of HIV+ in 1988 as the rest of England and Wales put together for that year, the scale of the problem however undoubtedly to do with the more developed response in that area (Edinburgh is sometimes nicknamed 'AIDS City'). At Saughton there is a special unit 'Allemuir' where HIV+ inmates can go to rest or to do exercise and work. There are counselling sessions run by prison officers (!) and educational posters and information are spread about the wings.

Of course many of these responses are as much to do with a desire for smooth prison administration as a concern for prisoners' welfare, as Saughton's governor John Pearce made clear in a T.V. interview recently, when he specifically pointed to the hopelessness of the situation for many prisoners who might then have nothing to lose by 'kicking back' at the system. The relatively liberal regime at Saughton was clearly about defusing such possibilities.

Unfortunately, effective responses like the provision of condoms and needle cleaning kits, or supplies of clean needles for prisoners has not occurred in Britain. Figures for 1991 (HIV News Review, Nov) estimate that over 10% of prisoners are probably drug users and between 62% and 75% of these often share needles. Needles are smuggled into prisons (often 'cut downs' which are shortened and hence easier to hide) and routinely shared by numbers of prisoners.

The prison administration know this goes on, as they also know much 'unprotected' sex goes on, with the associated dangers of spreading HIV but still they persist with patronising lectures about safety and 'problem behaviours' without providing the facilities to make safer behaviour a real possibility.

An Act Up demonstration in May of 1989 saw helium filled condoms with safer sex leaflets attached, floating over the walls of Pentonville Prison and showed up the fact that condoms were not supplied inside prison. The situation remains a real obstacle to tackling the risks of HIV transmission and highlights the prison services' failure to address the real issues despite the softly softly approach in some places.

The lack of clear and reliable information about HIV and Aids in prison also contributes to the fear and ignorance that breed victimisation. This applies to both prisoners and staff, who receive minimal training on the issue. Attitudes may be gauged by the fact that the Prison Officers Association actually voted for compulsory testing of prisoners in 1990, only to be thwarted by the fact that this would have been against the law, constituting an 'assault' if consent was not given. Staff may lead the way in harassing prisoners, forcing them to eat alone, or with their own plate, exercise alone or be excluded from association. An inmate of Holloway told of how prisoners would stub out their cigarettes on the dinner plate of one woman with HIV and similar accounts of victimi-



sation can be heard all over. From the U.S. we hear of how prisoners may be fed from special diet trays and served by other prisoners who are told to wear gloves while feeding them. Thus inmates suffer stigmatization, harassment and violation of confidentiality in general, lack of counselling, poor medical provision and even the use of mood-altering drugs without their consent, even though there is no knowledge of these having any effect on the virus. AIDS is becoming the main cause of death in some urban areas of the U.S. and currently 17 states mandatorily segregate HIV+ prisoners.



**ACT UP demonstration outside Pentonville nick - May 1989.**

In New York, 25% of the prison population are positive. Activists in U.S. prisons work around getting sentence reductions for those with AIDS and act as legal advocates fighting against lack of medical treatment and discriminatory policies. For many prisoners with HIV or AIDS, this brings further maltreatment from the prison authorities and a prisoner needing medical attention may be subjected to "diesel therapy" whereby they are moved by bus from segregation unit to segregation unit, on the way to a medical centre, so that they arrive in a deteriorated condition. This is perhaps only taking to an extreme the neglect that seems to be prison policy everywhere and in many cases this institutionalised neglect is tantamount to a death sentence. Generally, prisons

with their poor nutrition and inadequate medical care provide an unhealthy psychological and physical environment which may be bad for a person's health. For a prisoner with HIV, this may speed up the onset of full blown AIDS.

Inmates of Saughton prison talked on a recent T.V. report of how a 'life' sentence now could literally mean life for many prisoners with HIV who may develop full blown AIDS and die within the span of their sentence. Prisoners in Italy have expressed similar concerns and recently HIV+ inmates organised protests against the lack of medical treatment in Italian jails. In October 1991, 156 of the 180 remand prisoners in Due Palazzi prison in Padua signed a statement complaining about medical treatment in the jail and demanding freedom for Umberto Ceccato and another particularly ill prisoner. They stated: "No court has sentenced them to death in jail!" After Umberto's death, prisoners at the jail staged a hunger strike and on November 7th, a demonstration in support of the prisoners was organised by various squatter, student and workers group in Padua.

At least 90 of the 180 prisoners at Due Palazzi are HIV+ but although the Italian government recently authorised prison governors to arrange for prisoners with AIDS to leave prison and continue their detention in hospital, in many cases this is not happening, partly due to the obstruction of the authorities and partly because of a lack of hospital facilities. The courage and determination of the Due Palazzi prisoners in organising against their grim situation is an inspiration.

In the U.S. Susan Rosenberg (currently an inmate of Marianna prison in Florida) wrote in the paper 'Prison News Service' of how she and other prisoners in D.C. prison where she was previously held had managed to set up weekly educationals on HIV and organised discussions and some individual counselling with the help of some outreach workers and AIDS counsellors on the outside. Prisoners took the initiative themselves in the face of disinterest from the staff. In fact she suggests that their efforts were tolerated because to a certain extent it made up for the administration's lack of action - without any cost to the state. She also drew attention to the fact that prison staff tried to use counselling or support groups to identify who was HIV+ and keep an eye on prisoners in an extension of surveillance.

**Continued Page 14**



## News From Greece

As we go to press, we have heard that in relation to the occupation of the Polytechnic in Athens and subsequent demonstrations last year, (see last ABC Bulletin), two people - Yannis Balis and Theodore Triantaphyllis - have been arrested and charged with theft and vandalism, despite there being no evidence against them.

A shop owner claims that he 'recognised' the above comrades (without being certain) as responsible for thefts from his shop. As a consequence, charges have been brought against them for all the thefts and damage caused to the Polytechnic during the occupation, despite the fact that in court, the witness for the prosecution did not even bother to turn up to identify Yannis or Theodore. This has occurred at a time when the greek state is launching a concerted attack against anarchists, revolutionaries and all those who are standing up and questioning the state.

Yannis was involved in publishing a libertarian periodical, an active member of one of Athen's squatter communitites and was generally politically very active. As such, he made an ideal target for the state to frame. He has, in fact, been hounded by the cops constantly for the past few years - he has been frequently picked up and beaten up; in one case he was tortured for a whole night resulting in serious injury.

Yannis was also one of the 33 arrested in November for fly-posting (see last Bulletin). However, although the 33 were subjected to beatings and torture by the cops, by the time the cases came to court, the whole incident had become a national scandal due to the manner in which the cops tried to distort the evidence and the fact that the whole thing was obviously a

farce. Eventually one defendant was given 6 months, but this was quashed at appeal. However, these defendants should not be confused with those who were arrested earlier on in November of whom 18 were given sentences between 1.5 and 7 years.

Yannis and Theodore are likely to remain confined for months until the trial is held. Other comrades are concerned not only for these two defendants, but also because this is only part of the process that the state is using to intimidate and oppress - others may well be arrested and find themselves in similar situations. As from the 9<sup>th</sup> March, Yannis has been on Hunger Strike; as from the 17<sup>th</sup>, so has Theodore.

You can help by writing letters of protest to: The Minister, Ministry of Justice, 96 Mesogeion Av, Athens, Greece.

Or to the following newspapers: Eleutherotypia, Kolokotroni 8, 105 61 Athens. Fax: 3242418.

Ta Nea Newspaper, 8 Ch.Lada St, Athens. Fax: 3228797

Letters of support can be sent to: **The Committee of Solidarity for Y.Balis and Th.Triantaphyllis**, c/o "The Half Moon Pirates", T.O. 31362, T.K. 10035, Athens, Greece, Theodore is being held in Fylaki Larissas, Larissa, Greece, but communication with him is very difficult.

We also received the news that in December last year, armed police busted a squat in Athens, beating people up and trashing the building. 86 people were arrested, fingerprinted and had their photographs taken, but were later released.

### POLL TAX

## COLCHESTER 15

During a peaceful anti-poll tax demonstration in Colchester in March 1990, the cops waded in, in their usual fashion and 15 demonstrators ended up charged either with Riot (Section 1, Public Order Act) or Violent Disorder (Section 2, Public Order Act). The former carries a maximum 10 year sentence; the latter 5 years. The 15 defendants have been split in two groups: the first were put on trial in November last year and the trial lasted 3 months. The result is that two defendants were found guilty of Riot (sentences not yet known), two guilty of Violent Disorder and four acquitted. All those convicted will be appealing.

Of the four found not guilty, three had been allowed bail but only with daily signing-ons and overnight curfews. The judge - Judge Binns (who also presided over the Brian Moore trial) was said to be clearly biased against the defendants - apparently he consistently blocked many of the defence cases using spurious "legal technicalities". The remaining seven defendants have their pre-trial hearing coming up on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Write to those imprisoned:

**Terry Frost DL1911**. HMP Norwich, Knox Rd, Mousehold, Norwich, NR1 4LY. (0603 37531). Riot. 2 years. EDR= 6/8/93.



**Andy Hester NL2430.** HMP Britannia, Knox Rd, Mousehold, Norwich NR1 4LY. Riot. 18 months.

**Christine Hammett TV0063.** HMP Holloway, Parkhurst Rd, London N7 Violent Disorder, 9 months.

**Patrick Tyler.** HMYOI Norwich, Knox Rd, Mousehold, Norwich NR1 4LY. Violent Disorder, 6 months.

*Colchester 15 Defence Campaign, c/o Terry Peach, AEU Halls, Barrack St, Colchester, Essex.*

### **TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEFENDANTS**

**TIM DONAGHY MW0105** HMP Downview, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Surrey SM25PD. 3 years for Section 2. EDR Feb '93. His parole was recently refused.

**MARK HUTCHINGS MW2737** HMP Coldingley, Bisley, Woking, Surrey GU24 9EX. 27 months for Criminal Damage, Theft, Possession. EPD 24/4/92; EDR 22/1/93.

**SIMON RUSSELL ND1666** HMP The Mount, Molyneaux Avenue, Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP3 ONZ. EPD May '92; EDR June '93. 18 months for Section 2 & 30 months on two counts relating to ALF activities.

**BRIAN TAVARES MV3239** HMP Camp Hill, Clissold Rd, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5PB. EDR Nov '92. 3 years for Section 2.

*EPD= Earliest Parole Date; EDR=Earliest Date of Release. (Remission Date). For sentences of a year or more, EDR is automatically half of sentence except for Non-Payment Prisoners who cannot get remission.*

### **NON-PAYERS**

**DEBBIE CLARK XW2474** HM Remand Centre, Puclechurch, Nr Bristol BS17. (0275 822606). EDR 25<sup>th</sup> May. 60 days. Only one out of 25 defendants imprisoned. Judicial review expected.

**TOMMY SHERIDAN** HMP Saughton, 33 Stenhouse Rd, Edinburgh EH11.

6 months for Contempt. EDR May. Sent down for defying court injunction banning his attendance at a Anti Poll Tax blockade of a poinding.

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## **Whitemoor continued from Page 3**

Whitemoor remained on lock-down and the administration smugly announced that it had successfully nipped an incipient riot in the bud. Arriving at Pentonville during the early hours of the morning, one group of prisoners were informed by the governor that Whitemoor had "won" and the same process would take place throughout the long term prison system.

In fact Whitemoor lost, and lost quite demonstrably. Billed as a show-case prison at a cost of £89 million and heralded as a liberal experiment in the containment and treatment of long term prisoners, Whitemoor now replaces Albany as an end-of-the-line hate factory. For the prisoners who remain and those that replace the transferred 'ringleaders', the lesson of the March strike will have been learned; peaceful negotiation with such an administration is both futile and counter-productive; direct action is therefore the only worthwhile strategy to adopt. In terms of how the Whitemoor strike was 'resolved', the Home Office can congratulate itself on having created the necessary conditions for a British Attica."

Contact: **John Bowden B41173.** HMP Pentonville, Caledonian Road, London N7.

Or write to the Home Office: Home Office Prison Department, Queen Annes Gate, London SW1.

Latest News: On the 30<sup>th</sup> April, Tim Sullivan, one of the former Whitemoor prisoners held in Pentonville, brought north London to a standstill. He scaled the prison roof in protest over desperately needed dental treatment and over the refusal to give him painkillers. Police and prison authorities closed down Caledonian Road and re-routed traffic and harassed passers-by. The other prisoners were punished by morning visitors being turned away; exercise was stopped and tea and coffee were removed from afternoon visits(!). But there was success for Tim - he received medical attention and had his operation on the next working day.

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# PRISON SUICIDES

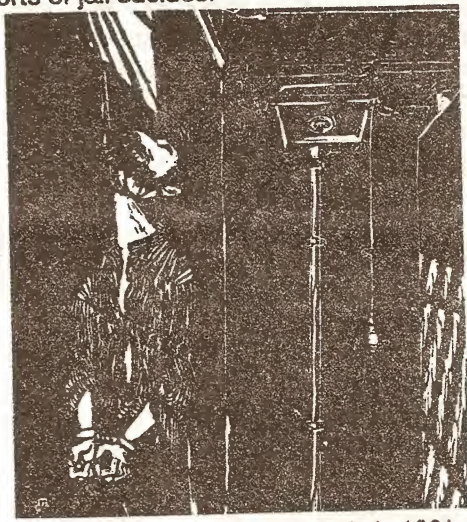
Last year, a total of 41 prisoners committed suicide in English and Welsh prisons - compared with 48 in 1989 and 50 in 1990 - a sickening reminder of the fact that prison does not turn people from 'criminals' to 'good citizens' but merely drives them to desperation, imprisons them for their beliefs, for trying to survive in this society (a third of all inmates are inside for non-payment of fines or taxes) or for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Suicides in prison are nothing new, but they are now reaching such proportions that the State must be seen to be doing something about the situation that it is responsible for creating in the first place. In December 1990 Judge Stephen Tumin published recommendations for improved standards to reduce the death toll - although implementing these recommendations may well reduce the suicide rate, it nevertheless clearly shows the real problem to be the prison system as a whole.

Inquests this year returned eight verdicts of death brought about or aggravated by lack of care - inmates who suffered from medical problems and doctors who didn't want to know. In one case, a paranoid schizophrenic had his file lost and was examined only once by a part-time doctor who knew nothing about suicide prevention. In another case, a depressive hanged himself after being seen 24 times by eight different doctors, none of whom discussed his case.

One of the prisons with one of the highest suicide rates is Feltham Young Offenders' Institute in West London. An inquiry has been launched into this prison, one of the country's newest. Three suicides could have been prevented if safety measures had been carried out, but these were ignored on "cost grounds". It was recommended in the Tumin Report that all beds be bolted to the floor to prevent people hanging themselves from upturned beds. The report also recommended an increase in 'education and exercise' to help prevent desperation. However, education has been completely abolished for remand prisoners (e.g. Feltham) and cut for convicted. The report has thus been ignored and regarded as irrelevant. Feltham has an "intolerable regime" with young offenders aged 15-21 being locked up for up to 19 hours a day with only one hour's exercise. There are also allegations of bullying.

So for inmates, not only is there the problem of surviving brutal conditions but there is also the

lack of medical care - it is well known that prisoners have to wait far longer for treatment than those outside - whether physical or mental. The only solution to these problems is not by mild reforms but by destroying the prison system as it stands - otherwise there will be many more reports of jail suicides.



The prisoners who committed suicide in 1991:

- January  
Gloucester: *Kenneth Carpenter*, 42, hanged. The Mount, Hertfordshire: *Sasha Moore*, 19, hanged. Britannia, Norwich: *Kevin Howett*, 36, hanged. Wandsworth: *Delroy McKnight*, 29, throat cut. Full Sutton, York: *Michael Jamieson*, 33, hanged.
- February  
Manchester: *Mark Tyler*, 22, hanged. Cardiff: *Stephen Hale*, 23, hanged.
- March  
Liverpool: *Darren Mullins*, 22, hanged. Bristol: *Anthony Ross*, 32, hanged.
- April  
Oxford: *Peter Bendall*, 29, hanged. Garth, Preston: *Alan Pickavance*, 38, cut wrists. Leeds: *Michael Rawnsley*, 31, hanged.
- May  
Liverpool: *Gerald Donaldson*, 28, set fire to himself. London: *Paddy O'Grady*, 24, hanged. Featherstone, Wolverhampton: *Jason Williams*, 34, hanged.
- June  
Wormwood Scrubs: *Mark Gaynor*, 21, hanged. Durham: *Kenneth Hunter*, 27, hanged.
- July  
Pentonville: *Vincent McFadden*, 54, hanged. Parkhurst: *Kevin Hole*, 29, hanged. Full Sutton, York: *Wayne Atkins*, 24, hanged. Liverpool: *Morris Hazledon*, 41, hanged. Grendon, Bucks: *Alan Morris*, 30, hanged.



Manchester: *Andrew Conneely*, 21, hanged.

#### August

Birmingham: *Horace Boswell*, 25, hanged. Preston: *Colin Gibson*, 35, hanged. Dorchester: *Raymond Pering*, 45, hanged. Wakefield: *William Patrick*, 31, hanged. Birmingham: *Mark Dawson*, 23, hanged. Feltham: *Lee White*, 18, hanged.

#### September

Nottingham: *Bernard Glennon*, 45, hanged. Leicester: *Anthony Wright*, 20, hanged. Feltham: *Jeffrey Horler*, 15, hanged.

#### October

Grendon: *James Robertson*, 37, hanged. Winchester: *Terence Preston*, 40, hanged. Haverigg, Cumbria: *Mark Elliott*, 25, hanged. Stafford: *Malcolm Hobbs*, 29, hanged.

#### November

Birmingham: *David Taylor*, 44, suffocated with plastic bag. Norwich: *George Allen*, overdose.

#### December

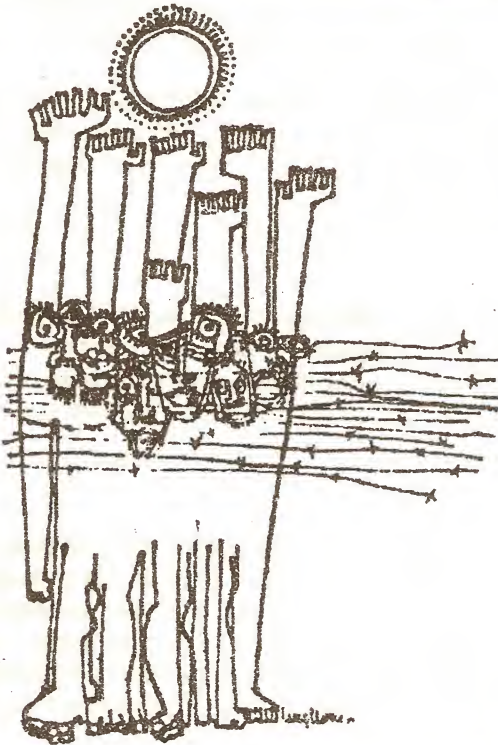
Stoke Heath, Shropshire: *Graham Jones*, 19, hanged. Long Lartin, Worcestershire: *Freddie Watkins*, 52, overdose. Leeds: *Melvin Hodgson*, 30, hanged.

## ATTICA - PRISONERS SUE

In September 1971, prisoners in Attica prison, Buffalo, New York, rebelled against brutal conditions. They took control of the prison, kept several screws hostage and with unity, discipline and self-organisation, demanded justice and better conditions. After four days of negotiations, the State Governor ordered the army and prison guards to crush the uprising. As a result, they killed 32 prisoners and 11 guards in the process, with 6 more prisoners dying later. Many prisoners were tortured and denied medical care and many more received additional sentences of up

to 1000 years inside (!).

More than 20 years later, ex-prisoners from Attica have filed a civil suit against prison and State government officials for their responsibility in the massacre. The judge and the legal system are, naturally, set against them and they need international support. Please send messages of support and donations to: *The Attica Justice Committee, 605 Richmond Ave, Buffalo, New York NY14222, USA.*



WE ARE MEN! WE ARE NOT  
BEASTS AND DO NOT INTEND TO BE  
BEATEN OR DRIVEN AS SUCH...WHAT  
HAS HAPPENED HERE IS BUT THE  
SOUND BEFORE THE FURY OF  
THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED...  
WE CALL UPON ALL THE  
CONSCIENTIOUS CITIZENS OF AMER-  
ICA TO ASSIST US IN PUTTING  
AN END TO THIS SITUATION THAT  
THREATENS THE LIVES OF NOT ONLY  
US, BUT EACH AND EVERY ONE OF  
THEM AS WELL.

-FROM THE FIVE DEMANDS  
OF THE INMATES OF ATTICA



# PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR PRISONER SUPPORT - WHAT YOU CAN DO

## WRITING TO PRISONERS

Prison isolates people from the outside world. Besides visiting is the most important thing you can do to help break down that isolation, so the prisoner does not feel forgotten. If you can't think of much to write just send a card wishing them well - it is the fact that you have bothered to write that matters. If you know a prisoner personally it is especially important to write as obviously contact from old friends is valued. But this does not mean that if you are a stranger to the prisoner they won't appreciate your letter. Remember all letters to prisoners are opened and censored so don't write anything that could jeopardise future actions or someone's freedom.

Don't expect a reply to your letter as prisoners are restricted as to how many letters they can write each week. Sometimes prisons restrict the number of letters a prisoner can receive - this is less likely to happen if letters are not too long.

Generally it is best not to write more than four sides of writing paper or two sides of A4 paper per letter. Most prisons do not allow letters sent in with no sender's address on them. It is possible to use a false address, but bear in mind that a prisoner may reply, so use an address you can get post from. Some prisons also refuse to allow PO Box numbers as addresses - check with the prison first.

## VISITING PRISONERS

Remand prisoners (that is prisoners who have not been tried) are normally entitled to a visit of at least 15 minutes every day except Sunday, although some prisons differ from this. Prisoners can normally have up to three visitors per day, but they all have to visit at the same time. If a prisoner does not have a visiting rota, try a let them know a week or so in advance that you are coming so they can inform you if someone else is visiting that day.

Convicted prisoners are entitled to one visit every 2 weeks if they are under 21. Over 21 and they are entitled to one visit per week, although many prisons allow only one visit every two weeks. Prisoners have to send out a visiting order (v.o.) to the persons they want to visit them. Visits are normally a minimum of 30 minutes and often one or two hours.

## NEWSPAPERS

Most prisons have a newsagents nearby which supplies newspapers to prisoners. The prison will tell you where the newsagent is. Newspapers and magazines for prisoners will have to be ordered and paid for at the shop. The prison will also tell you how many papers and magazines each prisoner is allowed. Alternative magazines have to be sent direct from a bookshop or the organisation producing them.

## BOOKS

Some prisons will accept books handed in or sent in by friends. Most prisons demand that the books are new and sent direct from the bookshop. Obviously you will have to pay postage. However, it varies from prison to prison - always check with the prison first. Some community and alternative bookshops will agree to send on books not bought in their shop, so if you have a book that will pass as new, then it is worth asking if they will send it. It is important that it is clear to the prison that the books have come direct, so ask the bookshop to enclose some headed notepaper or stamp the parcel with their address.



## WRITING PAPER

Remand prisoners are normally allowed to use writing paper, envelopes and stamps sent in to them. The writing paper should not be wire bound. Generally, convicted prisoners are not allowed to use any writing paper etc, other than that supplied by the prison, but again it is best to check with the prison first. They are usually not able to use stamps or S.A.E.s sent in from the outside, but if they receive any they will be converted into cash and put in the prisoners bank account.

## MONEY

Some prisons allow money to be handed in on visits. Otherwise, money can be sent in. It is not a good idea to send cash as this may go missing. Postal orders and cheques are acceptable which should be made payable to the prisoner. They will then have to sign the back of the cheque so they will know of any money received. The prisoner can then use the money to buy food, tobacco, toiletries, stamps etc., but it is worth noting that in many prisons £10 is the maximum

## FOOD

Since 1st March 1988, prisoners (both remand and convicted) are not allowed to have food sent in, or brought in from outside. Food sent in is normally destroyed or eaten by prison officers.

## CASSETTES AND RADIO

Prisoners are allowed a radio with medium and long wave bands only. Some prisons demand that an earplug be supplied as well. Cassette players are often allowed with earphones. The cassette player must have no recording facility. Prisoners can have pre-recorded tapes but in many prisons they must be sent in direct from a shop. Both radios and cassette players must be battery powered. Duracell batteries are not allowed.

## TOILETRIES

Most prisons no longer allow toiletries to be supplied from outside. Normally the prisoner will be able to buy them from the prison canteen or in some cases prisons allow them to be ordered from selected shops outside.

## REMEMBER

Whatever you are thinking of sending to a prisoner, find out first what the prisoner wants as often there is a limit on what can be received. Also, there is such a wide variation between what different prisons allow, always ring the prison and check what they will accept.

## SUPPORT THE PRISONERS

It is essential that prisoners are supported as they are inside for us. They have been imprisoned because they are struggling for a better world, or just to survive, like all of us. Furthermore, supporting prisoners can help break down the myths that surround prisons, creating fear in us. It is a good idea to set up local Prisoner Support Groups to ensure that there is regular and organised support for prisoners. Even one letter can be a boost for someone inside. And there is so much more that can be done - publicity, visits, financial support, regular letters, pickets of prisons (if the prisoner agrees), campaigning for better conditions for prisoners, continuing the struggle. We must never forget prisoners as they need our support.

**THEY'RE IN THERE FOR US - WE'RE OUT HERE FOR THEM**





## PRISON PRIVATISATION—9<sup>th</sup> CENTURY STYLE!

Britain's "first" private prison opened recently at the Wolds (a remand prison), Humberside, costing £6m and where the wardens wear blazers and the inmates have the keys to their own cells. It was Margaret Thatcher who enthusiastically embraced the idea of privatising prisons from the U.S. The Tories are hoping that the Wolds will be the first in a series of prison privatisations in the next 10 years. Of course, this is also an attempt to break the Prison Officers Association which the Tories see as an obstacle. In the Wolds, standards will be improved - 14 days outside cells, more education etc., but only a few of the country's remand prisoners will 'benefit' from this. Those left to languish in state prisons will still have to put up with the same shitty conditions - no money in it, so nothing changes. This will create a two-tier system, with the Home Office ensuring that the best facilities are available at the Wolds, but other prisons are starved of cash and the inmates consequently suffer more. The lucrative contract to run Britain's first private prison was awarded to Group 4, the security company, who, no doubt, will make a lot of money out of locking people up.

But if you thought that this was Britain's first private prison, you're wrong. The first one opened more than 1100 years ago and received its first prisoner about AD860. It was founded by St. Swithin, Bishop of Winchester and started as a cell in Southwark, south London, for holy men caught nicking from the poor box. It was known as The Clink. By 1134 it had become fully 'privatised' - prisoners had to pay for their own upkeep, provide their own food and drink and to contribute to the expense of their own punishments (!). More money got you extra-light manacles instead of the standard-issue heavy iron fetters with which prisoners were chained to the walls. If you were loaded, you could even buy your way out of jail. The whole private prison business was so successful that the franchise was passed down from one prison management to another for 600 years. Most of those imprisoned were for debt. But there's always a silver lining - the Clink was attacked by poll tax rioters in 1381 and finally burned down 400 years later by the Gordon rioters. The site is now a museum.

### ***HIV and AIDS in Prison Continued.***

This ties in with the situation we find in many prisons all over where an apparently more liberal regime is adopted in the interests of smoother prison administration. Concern for a 'clearer picture' of the levels of HIV infection that have prompted some prisons to abandon segregation as counter-productive is often linked to government fears of prisons being 'AIDS breeding-grounds' that may threaten the wider population on the outside. Such dubious concerns reflect the real reasons behind the 'caring' approach currently being recommended, not the welfare of prisoners. In struggling to deal with the problem of HIV in prisons, Susan Rosenberg concluded:

"The lesson of this experience is that only when the community is actively willing to take responsibility for its incarcerated members and bring real organised pressure on the prison administration and officials and works in conjunction with prisoners themselves who understand best what the problems and needs are, does change begin. It is only a small beginning". In Britain it is a beginning we need to see.

*Send messages of support to the Italian HIV prisoners c/o Radio Sherwood, Vicolo Pontecorvo, 1A, 35100 Padova, Italy. (Tel: 010 39 49 8752129 Fax: 0103949664589).*

*The Terence Higgins Trust provides advice and support for prisoners with HIV and their families and has a 'buddy' service for London and the home counties. Ask for the Prison Liaison Officer on 071-242-1010, 3-10pm daily. 'Mainliners' provide support and counselling on 071-738-7333.*

*Gay Rights in Prison meet on the first and third Saturdays monthly at the London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 67 Cowcross Street. (071-608-1471).*



## WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

March was a busy month for London ABC. Amongst other things, we were involved in three pickets supporting prisoners here and abroad.

On 16<sup>th</sup> March, London ABC and the International Solidarity Network held a picket at Air Iberia to protest the case of Gerardo C. Ferre who is serving 6 years in Spain for burning a Spanish flag in 1983. There were about 20 people present and hundreds of leaflets were handed out contrasting Spain's treatment of political prisoners with its current attempt (Expo '92, Barcelona Olympics) to improve its image and attract tourists.

On 18<sup>th</sup> March we picketed the Home Office in solidarity with framed prisoners, and with the 'Jailbreak' demonstration which was held in Birmingham on the same day. Many leaflets were given out and a few people showed interest in the issue of framed prisoners.

25<sup>th</sup> March and we were back at the Home Office, this time together with the One Off Prisoners Support Group and Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! and others, to protest about the victimisation of the prisoners who had taken part in the Whitemoor work strike. (See article page ). This was a noisy demo, with lots of placards and a megaphone, reminding everyone of the crimes and brutality of the prison system.

Pickets and demos may not get immediate results, but they do draw attention to prison cases and struggles and they remind authorities that they can't get away with their destruction of people's lives without opposition from both inside and outside prisons. If anyone is interested in organising solidarity demonstrations, or has creative ideas for getting publicity, get in touch with us.





**NOTES FOR FRAMED PRISONERS:** London ABC has copies of a set of notes to help framed prisoners or their friends, relatives and supporters to spread information about their case, and how to go about fighting for justice. These notes were prepared jointly by people from "Conviction" and the R.C.G. paper "Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!" and are extremely useful. For a copy, send an SAE to London ABC.

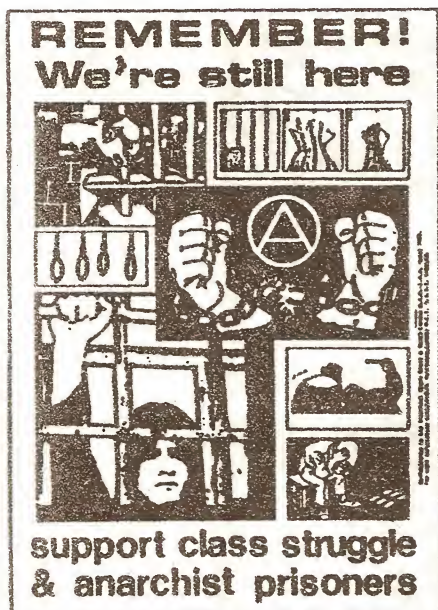
### T-SHIRTS

A few incredibly tasty ABC T-shirts are still available for the paltry sum of £5 each. Sizes are all XL, white with coloured design. Please send cheques/POs payable to 'London Anarchist Black Cross'.

**PRISONERS LIST:** We also have a prisoners list which has the names and addresses and brief information about prisoners supported by the ABC. This includes framed prisoners, anarchists and other revolutionaries inside, those fighting back inside the system and others. Again send an SAE and a donation if you can afford one, and we'll send you a copy.

**APOLOGIES:** In the last ABC Bulletin we printed the wrong addresses for no less than four ABC groups: Edinburgh, Leamington Spa, South Wales and believe it or not, our own! The correct addresses are on the back page. Sorry for any problems this may have caused.

LONDON ABC also has copies of the poster "Remember we're still here - supporting class struggle/anarchist prisoners". A3, red and black on white for 30p (plus 24p postage).



### JOHN PEROTTI APPEAL

As mentioned in the last Bulletin, John Perotti still urgently needs donations to fund his appeal. All donations should be sent to: John Perotti Defence Fund, c/o EHSA, PO Box 421, Edinburgh, Scotland. They will be forwarded directly to John.

Birmingham ABC, c/o Box 3, 190 Alum Rock Road, Salfley, Birmingham B8.

Bolton ABC, PO Box 47, Bolton BL2 1QA.

Bradford ABC, c/o 1 in 12 Club, 31 Manor Row, Bradford BD1.

Essex ABC, c/o London ABC (until further notice).

Leamington Spa ABC, Box 1, 22 High St, Leamington Spa CV31.

Leeds ABC, Box JAG, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS1.

Liverpool ABC, PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 6AU.

London ABC, c/o 121 Bookshop, 121 Ralton Road, London SE24.

Manchester ABC, Box 8, 1 Newton St, Manchester M1.

Norwich ABC, PO Box 73, Norwich NR1 2EB.

Oxford ABC, Box A, EOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd, Oxford.

Preston ABC, PO Box 172, Preston, Lancs.

Sheffield ABC, Black Star, PO Box 448, Sheffield S1 1NY.

South Wales ABC, PO Box 368, Cardiff CF2 1SQ.

### SCOTLAND

Edinburgh ABC, c/o EHSA, PO Box 421, Edinburgh.

Glasgow ABC, PO Box 234, Glasgow G5.

### IRELAND

Belfast ABC, PO Box 148, Belfast BT1.

Derry ABC, c/o Organise, PO Box 5, Derry BT48 6PD.

For international contacts, get in touch with your nearest group.

**LONDON ABC c/o 121 BOOKSHOP, 121 RALTON RD, LONDON SE24**